

THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY AWARDS

Honoring Outstanding Community Service by Young Americans

February 10, 2015

The Honorable Nikki Haley
Office of the Governor
State House
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Governor Haley:

We thought you'd like to know that several students from South Carolina are among a select group of young Americans being named today as the nation's top youth volunteers for 2015, in the 20th annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. This is an extraordinary honor; more than 30,000 young people across the country participated in this year's program.

Anna Price of Columbia and John Ward of Chapin have been selected as South Carolina's top youth volunteers for this year. As State Honorees, each will receive a \$1,000 award, an engraved silver medallion, and a trip to Washington, D.C., May 2-5 for the program's national recognition events. Four other students from South Carolina have been named Distinguished Finalists and will receive bronze medallions at local ceremonies.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, created in 1995 by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), are designed to emphasize the importance our nation places on service to others, and to encourage all young Americans to contribute to their communities.

Enclosed is the news release being issued today to announce these awards, plus more information on your honorees and how to contact them. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to extend your congratulations and encouragement. You may want to consider honoring these young students with an official proclamation (suggested language is enclosed).

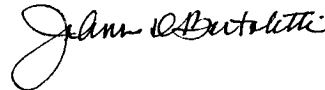
During the May events in Washington, a distinguished National Selection Committee will name ten National Honorees who will each receive an additional \$5,000 award, a gold medallion, a crystal trophy, and a \$5,000 grant from The Prudential Foundation for a charitable organization of their choice. Your State Honorees are among those being considered for these national awards. If you would like additional information, please call (973) 802-4568, write to us at spirit@prudential.com, or visit spirit.prudential.com.

Congratulations for having such outstanding young people in South Carolina.

Sincerely,



John Strangfeld
Chairman and CEO
Prudential Financial



JoAnn Bartoletti
Executive Director
NASSP



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Honoring Outstanding Community Service by Young Americans

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 10, 2015

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SOUTH CAROLINA'S TOP TWO YOUTH VOLUNTEERS SELECTED IN 20th ANNUAL NATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM

**Columbia and Chapin students earn \$1,000 awards,
engraved medallions and trip to nation's capital**

**Honors also bestowed on youth volunteers in
Columbia, Hilton Head Island, Hartsville and Pawleys Island**

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Anna Price, 17, of Columbia and John Ward, 13, of Chapin today were named South Carolina's top two youth volunteers of 2015 by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism. Anna was nominated by Richland Northeast High School in Columbia, and John was nominated by Chapin Middle School in Chapin. The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, now in its 20th year, is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Anna, a junior at Richland Northeast High School, shares her story of surviving a brain tumor to raise awareness and money for a variety of organizations that serve kids with cancer. In 2008, Anna was diagnosed with a brain tumor on her optic nerves. She underwent 14 months of chemotherapy and is now legally blind. “Before my brain tumor, community service was something I did, but it wasn’t a passion the way it is now,” she said. “I decided to use my situation as a springboard for community service. I want to return the kindness shown to me while I was in treatment.”

Since her treatment ended, Anna has been asked to participate in many different events that benefit sick children. She served as a mentor and hostess at a prom for kids with cancer, addressed motorcycle riders at a fundraising ride for a brain tumor foundation, promoted a college dance marathon that raises money for a children’s hospital, and helps sell promotional items at events that support pediatric cancer research. She also has spoken to members of South Carolina’s General Assembly about blindness, led a toy drive for hospitalized

– more –

children, and coordinated a mini-dance marathon at her high school that generated more than \$2,000. "Having somebody there to help you in your time of need is truly a blessing, and I want to offer that blessing to other people," Anna said.

John, an eighth-grader at Chapin Middle School, has raised \$1,500 by selling pink prayer bracelets to help a young mother in his community with advanced breast cancer. Three years ago when John's mother was homeroom mom for his brother's class, she called a new family that had arrived recently from out of state and learned that the mother of the family had been diagnosed with cancer shortly after moving to John's town. "She knew no one here, so my family and I decided to help out," said John. "We helped arrange meals, we invited them over for Thanksgiving, and looked after her four kids whenever she could not." But John wanted to do more. That opportunity came one Christmas when he and his brothers received a rubber-band bracelet-making kit. John came up with the idea of raising money for the family and increasing breast cancer awareness by making and handing out pink prayer bracelets.

He and his brothers began making "tons" of bracelets. John sent out text blasts and emails to invite friends to help at work parties on Friday afternoons. Then he and his brothers started handing out their "Bandz of Hope" in front of a local toy store. They did not charge for the bracelets but asked for donations. John said all the money he has collected goes directly to help the woman and her family in their fight against her disease. He vowed to continue to make his bracelets as long as she needs his help. "I would tell other people like me that it feels good to help others and it is the right thing to do," said John. "I might not be able to cure cancer now, but I sure can make a difference by financially helping one lady fight breast cancer."

As State Honorees, Anna and John each will receive \$1,000, an engraved silver medallion and an all-expense-paid trip in early May to Washington, D.C., where they will join the top two honorees from each of the other states and the District of Columbia for four days of national recognition events. During the trip, 10 students will be named America's top youth volunteers of 2015.

Distinguished Finalists

The program judges also recognized four other South Carolina students as Distinguished Finalists for their impressive community service activities. Each will receive an engraved bronze medallion.

These are South Carolina's Distinguished Finalists for 2015:

Makiah Belk, 18, of Columbia, S.C., a senior at Irmo High School, volunteered to help build and maintain a garden that provides food for the children at a local middle school. Makiah, who had previously attended a service trip to assist people living in poverty in Nicaragua, recruited several friends to help during the summer to plow, compost, weed, plant, water and harvest the garden.

Logan Fettes, 17, of Hilton Head Island, S.C., a senior at Hilton Head Island High School, founded “Operation Sunshine” in 2011, a service project to help spread “rays of comfort, joy, happiness and hope,” and since then has involved friends and family to help with various service projects including distributing stuffed animals to hospitalized children and tornado victims, collecting suitcases filled with toys and books for children in third world countries, and distributing sleeping bags and blankets for the homeless. Logan was inspired to serve by watching his brother fight a chronic illness.

Brittany Joyce, 18, of Hartsville, S.C., a senior at Hartsville High School, is developing a unique community project she calls “PERK, Police Encouraging Responsibility and Kindness,” which will involve local patrol and school resource officers identifying kids who are doing great things and rewarding them with recognition and gift certificates to local businesses. Brittany, who began the program in response to a fraudulent criminal incident in her town that created false perceptions about both the police and local residents, hopes her program will foster trust between the police and local youth by encouraging positive interactions.

Shea Thomas, 17, of Pawleys Island, S.C., a member of the American Red Cross Eastern South Carolina in Myrtle Beach and a senior at Academy for Arts, Science & Technology, has raised \$11,000 for the American Red Cross as a member of the Red Cross Rescue Racers, a nonprofit charity marathon training team. Shea not only runs in the race but has secured matching donations and gifts for giveaways from local businesses while also coordinating a fundraising dinner to help meet her goal of \$10,000.

“Prudential is honored to celebrate the contributions of these remarkable young volunteers,” said Prudential Chairman and CEO John Strangfeld. “By shining a spotlight on the difference they’ve made in their communities, we hope others are inspired to volunteer, too.”

“These students have not only improved their communities through their exemplary volunteer service, but also set a fine example for their peers,” said JoAnn Bartoletti, executive director of NASSP. “Each of their stories is proof of the impact one young person can have when they decide to make a difference.”

About The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards represents the United States’ largest youth recognition program based solely on volunteer service. All public and private middle level and high schools in the country, as well as all Girl Scout councils, county 4-H organizations, American Red Cross chapters, YMCAs and HandsOn Network affiliates, were eligible to select a student or member for a local Prudential Spirit of Community Award. These Local Honorees were then reviewed by an independent judging panel, which selected State Honorees and Distinguished Finalists based on criteria including personal initiative, effort, impact and personal growth.

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While in Washington, D.C., the 102 State Honorees – one middle level and one high school student from each state and the District of Columbia – will tour the capital's landmarks, meet top youth volunteers from other parts of the world, attend a gala awards ceremony at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, and visit their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill. On May 4, 10 of the State Honorees – five middle level and five high school students – will be named America's top youth volunteers of 2015. These National Honorees will receive additional \$5,000 awards, gold medallions, crystal trophies and \$5,000 grants from The Prudential Foundation for nonprofit charitable organizations of their choice.

Since the program began in 1995, more than 100,000 young volunteers have been honored at the local, state and national level. The program also is conducted by Prudential subsidiaries in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Ireland, India and China. In addition to granting its own awards, The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program also distributes President's Volunteer Service Awards to qualifying Local Honorees on behalf of President Barack Obama.

For information on all of this year's Prudential Spirit of Community State Honorees and Distinguished Finalists, visit <http://spirit.prudential.com> or www.nassp.org/spirit.

About NASSP

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is the leading organization of and voice for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and school leaders from across the United States and 35 countries around the world. The association connects and engages school leaders through advocacy, research, education, and student programs. NASSP advocates on behalf of all school leaders to ensure the success of each student and strengthens school leadership practices through the design and delivery of high quality professional learning experiences. Reflecting its long-standing commitment to student leadership development, NASSP administers the National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, National Elementary Honor Society, and National Association of Student Councils. For more information about NASSP, located in Reston, VA, visit www.nassp.org.

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About Prudential Financial

Prudential Financial, Inc. (NYSE: PRU), a financial services leader, has operations in the United States, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Prudential's diverse and talented employees are committed to helping individual and institutional customers grow and protect their wealth through a variety of products and services, including life insurance, annuities, retirement-related services, mutual funds and investment management. In the U.S., Prudential's iconic Rock symbol has stood for strength, stability, expertise and innovation for more than a century. For more information, please visit www.news.prudential.com.

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Editors: For full-color pictures of the Spirit of Community Awards program logo and medallions, click here: <http://bit.ly/Xi4oFW>

***The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards
2015 State Honorees and Distinguished Finalists
From South Carolina***

State Honorees:

Anna Price, 17
3425 Willow Ridge Road
Columbia, SC 29206
Tel: (803) 394-5426
Nominated by Richland Northeast High School

Anna shares her story of surviving a brain tumor to raise awareness and money for a variety of organizations that serve kids with cancer.

John Ward, 13
432 Quiet Pines Drive
Chapin, SC 29036
Tel: (803) 816-8014
Nominated by Chapin Middle School

John has raised \$1,500 by selling pink prayer bracelets to help a young mother in his community with advanced breast cancer.

Distinguished Finalists:

Makiah Belk, 18
118 Conrad Circle
Columbia, SC 29212
Tel: (803) 234-4967
Nominated by Irmo High School

Makiah volunteered to help build and maintain a garden that provides food for the children at a local middle school.

Logan Fettes, 17
15 Dahlgren Lane
Hilton Head Island, SC 29928
Tel: (843) 252-2735
Nominated by Hilton Head Island High School

Logan founded "Operation Sunshine" in 2011, a service project to help spread "rays of comfort, joy, happiness and hope," and since then has involved friends and family to help with various service projects including distributing stuffed animals to hospitalized children and tornado victims, collecting suitcases filled with toys and books for children in third world countries, and distributing sleeping bags and blankets for the homeless.

Brittany Joyce, 18
1423 Winyah Way
Hartsville, SC 29550
Tel: (843) 383-0167
Nominated by Hartsville High School

Brittany is developing a unique community project she calls "PERK, Police Encouraging Responsibility and Kindness," which will involve local patrol and school resource officers identifying kids who are doing great things and rewarding them with recognition and gift certificates to local businesses.

Shea Thomas, 17
130 Preservation Circle
Pawleys Island, SC 29585
Tel: (843) 240-8048
Nominated by American Red Cross Eastern South Carolina

Shea has raised \$11,000 for the American Red Cross as a member of the Red Cross Rescue Racers, a nonprofit charity marathon training team.

***For further information, please visit <http://spirit.prudential.com>,
call (973) 802-4568,
or write to spirit@prudential.com***

Sample language for a State Commendation

However effective government may be in serving the needs of its citizens, the soul of our state and its vitality as a place to live and work ultimately depend on the relationship of families, friends and neighbors. Strengthening those bonds is not as much in the hands of institutions or governments as it is in the hearts of our citizens – especially those who volunteer to help people of all ages, races and religions cope with illness, overcome hardships and barriers, adjust to social changes, and fulfill their potential. These volunteers are the unrecognized, unsung heroes of our society.

Two such heroes in our state are (honoree name) of (city) and (honoree name) of (city), who were recently named (state)'s top youth volunteers in The 2015 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program conducted by Prudential Financial and the National Association of Secondary School Principals to honor outstanding community service by young people.

Mr./Ms. _____ was honored for ... *(see enclosed press release for project information)*

Mr./Ms. _____ was recognized for ... *(see enclosed press release for project information)*

Given the challenges we face today, it is vital that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contributions that these young people have made. People of all ages need to think more about how we, as individual citizens, can work together at the local level to ensure the health and vitality of our towns and neighborhoods. Young volunteers like Mr./Ms. _____ and Mr./Ms. _____ are inspiring examples to all of us, and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow.

I heartily applaud Mr./Ms. _____ and Mr./Ms. _____ for their initiative in seeking to make their communities and our state a better place to live, and for the positive impact they have had on the lives of others. They have demonstrated a level of commitment and accomplishment that is truly extraordinary in today's world, and deserve our sincere admiration and respect. Their actions show that young Americans can – and do – play important roles in their communities, and that America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future.

As governor of (state) and on behalf of our entire state, I commend Mr./Ms. _____ and Mr./Ms. _____, and extend sincere congratulations on their accomplishments.